



## INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT

2006-03-0097

April 12, 2007

### IDEM EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FRAUD

*Inspector General David O. Thomas, after an investigation by Special Agent Mike Mischler and the assistance of Staff Attorney Amanda Schaeffer, reports as follows:*

This investigation involved the receipt of insurance monies by a state employee, Mustafa Ak, for dental procedures that did not occur.

This case originated when the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) received a request to investigate from the Office of the Indiana Attorney General. A letter was forwarded from Christine Danford, an Accredited Health Care Fraud Investigator (AHCF). Ms. Danford represents Delta Dental, an entity which provides dental insurance for employees of the State of Indiana. Ms. Danford stated that Delta Dental was investigating suspicious claims submitted by state employee Mustafa Ak in the approximate amount of \$3,000. OIG Special Agent Mike Mischler was assigned to investigate.

Mustafa Ak is an Environmental Engineer employee with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and has been a state employee for approximately 22 years. Delta Dental began an investigation of Mr. Ak who was repeatedly contacting

Dental Delta regarding payment for dental procedures he claimed that had been done on himself, his wife Zerrin Ak, and their children.

Delta Dental learned that these procedures were alleged by Mr. Ak to have occurred in Bursa, Turkey. Delta Dental sought to verify that this dentist existed and these services had been performed. Mr. Ak's claims were sent to Delta Dental from Mr. Ak, not from the dentist, which also raised suspicion.

The representative from Delta Dental found that this dentist existed. However, the dentist was contacted and indicated that he performed dental procedures on Mr. Ak in 2004, but not on Mrs. Ak or the children. The dentist also indicated that he did not do any procedures on Mr. Ak in 2005, as the claims indicated.

Mr. Ak also submitted dental claims seeking reimbursement from Delta Dental for work allegedly done on his family by four Indianapolis dentists. Delta Dental sent requests to these dentists to confirm these claims. Two of the dentists responded and indicated that they had not performed the procedures listed on the claims. In fact, these dentists indicated that they examined the x-rays submitted by Delta Dental for verification and these dentists confirmed that the procedures claimed by Mr. Ak had never been performed by any dentist.

OIG Special Agent Mischler contacted the State Personnel Department (SPD) to examine Mr. Ak's timesheets. Special Agent Mischler discovered that Mr. Ak claimed on his IDEM timesheet that he was working on the dates that he claimed he in was in Turkey receiving the dental procedures he claimed.

Special Agent Mischler then interviewed Mr. Ak on August 14, 2006. Special Agent Mischler pointed out to Mr. Ak that his timesheets indicated that he was working

during the time he was allegedly in Turkey receiving this dental work. Mr. Ak said that he may have mistakenly given the incorrect dates but insisted that he was in Turkey during those times. Later in the day after his interview, Mr. Ak called Special Agent Mischler to ask what would happen if he paid Delta Dental the money he owed for making these claims. Special Agent Mischler informed him that paying the money would not terminate the investigation.

Special Agent Mischler interviewed Mr. Ak again on September 5, 2006. In this interview, Mr. Ak acknowledged that he did not receive dental procedures in 2004 and 2005 as he submitted in his claims. He stated that he received dental procedures in 2001 and 2002 when coverage did not exist, and that he submitted the claims in 2004 and 2005 to recoup money he spent in 2001 and 2002 for these earlier procedures.

The investigation also revealed that Mr. Ak's x-rays revealed to the dentists that Mr. Ak's teeth had never had these procedures performed.

This case was referred to the Marion County Prosecutor's Office resulting in the filing of a criminal charge of theft, a class D felony. Repayment to the State of Indiana by Mr. Ak has been received in the amount of \$3,692.91.

Dated this 12<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2007.

  
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David O. Thomas, Inspector General